



# Caltrans Cooks Serve Up Holiday Cheer for Road Crews

John Pramuk fondly remembers the days he would wake early on Christmas morning, open presents with his wife and son and then prepare a nice warm breakfast for his family.

“It sort of topped off the morning with the scent of piping hot cinnamon rolls wafting through the house,” he said.

Depending on Mother Nature’s mood, this Christmas, Pramuk and more than 300 of his Caltrans colleagues may be on the job taking care of California’s mountain highways, instead of being at home with family and friends.

If that happens, Pramuk, supervising cook at the Whitmore Maintenance Station in the Sierra Nevada, will be making sure the sweet aroma of cinnamon rolls, homemade bread, holiday hams and pies as far as the eye can see await the army of Caltrans maintenance workers who will be busy on guard over the holidays keeping Interstate 80 open to traffic.

“It is a sacrifice to be away from your family at this special time of year. We all know that if the weather turns nasty, we will not be at home for the holidays. That’s part of the job when you work in the mountains,” said Pramuk. “We understand how important it is to keep these roads open. If it snows, the show goes on.”

But Pramuk is quick to downplay his role and instead directs the attention to the maintenance crews out plowing the road. “They are the heroes. When it



*Caltrans crewmembers and an occasional CHP officer can count on a hearty meal at Whitmore this holiday season when they break from work along I-80. When the snow falls, cookhouses at Whitmore, Kingvale, Myers and Caples Lake operate nonstop, feeding crews in the area.*

is storming, they are out there working 12 hour shifts to keep the highway open so that others can travel to spend the holidays with family and friends,” Pramuk said.

But the role played by Pramuk and his colleagues at the maintenance cookhouses at Whitmore and Kingvale on Interstate 80, Myers on Highway 50 and Caples Lake on Highway 88, are every bit as vital in making sure the mountain highways are passable in the winter.

“It’s a team effort,” said Stan Richins, Caltrans District 3 Maintenance Manager for the Sutter and Sierra Region. “You are away from home, the work is hard and it is 12 on and 12 off, day after day until the

storm ends. Every part of the operation is essential for us to be successful.”

That is where Pramuk and the other support staff play such a crucial role.

“We are an extended family and so we try to make holidays as special as we can. We try to make sure that when the crews come in, they have a nice hot meal and a pleasant place where they can unwind,” said Pramuk, a former professional musician who has been cooking up a storm for Caltrans maintenance crews in the Sierra Nevada at Kingvale and Whitmore since the early 1980s.

For Pramuk that will mean arriving by 4 a.m. on Christmas morning to bake homemade bread, a few special desserts and have breakfast waiting for the road crews as they come into the station all through the day and night.

Pramuk, who grew up in the Napa Valley, plied his culinary talents at some of Northern California’s finest eateries, before joining the Caltrans’ culinary staff.

As winter settles in over the mountains, Caltrans maintenance forces cast



*Photos by Ed Andersen*

a wary eye to the sky and keep a keen ear to the weather forecasts.

“We live and die by the forecasts,” said Richins.

If perfect conditions are in the forecast for Christmas Day (what the maintenance crews call “Bluebird”), then a skeleton staff will be on duty at the mountain stations with all other personnel on standby.

**Caltrans Cooks** *cont. on page 4*

# Caltrans Yard Hits Road to Make Way for New Los Angeles High School

**NORTH HOLLYWOOD** – The Caltrans equipment yard in North Hollywood is going back to school.

Under a landmark agreement signed between the department and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the equipment yard will be moving to a new location to make way for the construction of the new East Valley High School in Los Angeles.

The six-acre site at Vineland and Cumpston, which has been home to Caltrans Equipment Shop 7 for 85 years, is next to other properties the school district has designated for a new high school.

“This is a win-win situation for all the parties,” said Lisa Kunzman, Chief of the Caltrans Division of Equipment. “The school district gets land it desperately needs for a new high school while Caltrans will move to a new location

where we can continue to provide service to the department crews charged with operating and maintaining our transportation system.”

Last year, the LAUSD approached Caltrans District 7 in the hope of finding a way to ease overcrowding at Francis Polytechnic, Grant and North Hollywood high schools that serve the area. The North Hollywood location would allow many of the students

to attend school in their own community.

“Shop 7 was in a ideal location for the school district. Our concern was that a suitable new site would have to be determined before any move could be made. Working together, we were able to find a solution that benefits the transportation users, the taxpayers and the educational needs of thousands of students,” Kunzman says.

Three potential sites were identified for the equipment yard. The decision was made to move the facility to a site on San Fernando Road. The new site will have plenty of space and will provide easy access for the workers at Shop 7 to serve the area stretching from San Clemente in Orange County to Ojai in Ventura County and inland to Lancaster.

The 60 employees that work out of Shop 7 expect to be in their new home by mid-2003.

Construction of the new high school will begin in the fall of 2003 and be open for students in the spring of 2005.

The new Shop 7 will house a variety of functions including equipment repair, parts and materials receiving and distribution, equipment dispatch and management and overall administration. Caltrans’ share of the cost of the new facility is estimated at \$10 million and is being financed from the State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP).

# New Director for Caltrans Bay Area District



Bijan Sartipi has been named District 4 Director.

Sartipi, 44, replaces acting District 4 Director Randell Iwasaki, who has returned to his job as Deputy Director for Maintenance and Operations in Sacramento.

Sartipi, a native of Tehran, Iran, has been with the department for 20 years.

He has been District 4 Director of Design for two years.

A graduate from the University of the Pacific in Stockton with a degree in civil engineering, Sartipi has extensive experience in design and program/project management as a well as the capital outlay support program.

Sartipi has been involved in the design and delivery of the Hoffman Freeway, the I-80 operational improvement project in Contra Costa County, improvements on the Highway 101 auxiliary lanes, Route 92 truck climbing lane, Devil’s Slide Tunnel project in San Mateo County, Central Freeway in the City and County of San Francisco and the San Francisco International Airport Expansion project’s ramps and roadway improvements.

As District 4 Director, Sartipi will be responsible for overseeing Caltrans operations in the nine Bay Area counties covering 7,200 lane miles of highway, with over 4,100 employees, an annual budget of \$400 million for salary and operating expenses and a current construction program exceeding \$3.8 billion.

Andy Fremier, an 18-year veteran of the department, has been named District 4 Chief Deputy Director. Fremier has been the district’s deputy director for construction.

In addition to his construction experience, Fremier has worked in the district’s toll bridge program. Fremier was involved in the district’s recovery from the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, including overseeing the demolition of the Embarcadero Freeway.



## DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Director Jeff Morales

During his first term, Governor Gray Davis has made historic improvements to California's transportation system and is well along the path toward enhancing mobility across the state.

His commitment to transportation has risen steadily over the last three years. Largely as a result of his backing, one of every five miles on the State Highway System is being improved this year. And during 2002 the state had \$7 billion worth of projects on its multi-modal transportation system — which translates into approximately 182,000 jobs and nearly \$20 billion in economic activity.

It's a record amount and double the total for 1998.

However, on the heels of a very successful 2002, the Department finds itself facing significant financial challenges. There are two basic issues.

## Budget Situation Presents Challenge, Opportunity for Caltrans

On the one hand, we are projecting that State Highway Account (SHA) revenues will fall short with less money coming in from the federal government and truck weight fees. On the other, we face a suspension of General Fund support for our Traffic Congestion Relief Program (TCRP) through the next fiscal year.

Both the state and national economies have slowed in the last 18 months, made worse in light of September 11, 2001. And revenue estimates, made in better economic times, were more optimistic than our current expectations. As a result, SHA revenues are now forecast to be \$1.2 billion short of planned levels over the next two years.

A number of factors have contributed to this situation.

The Department had anticipated an adjustment of \$125 million a year through the life of the STIP from the federal Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA) — funds that we will not receive.

A 20 percent increase, expected in the first year of the reauthorization of the federal TEA-21 program, is not expected to be forthcoming.

And a new weight fee system went into effect last Jan. 1. The Department expected the new system to be "revenue neutral." However, revenues from those fees are down, and could amount to a nearly \$400 million shortfall through 2003/04 fiscal year.

The second major issue is the huge General Fund shortfall facing the State. As a result of this shortfall, Gov. Gray Davis has made a number of proposals

that help to balance the budget:

- He proposes to eliminate General Fund support for the TCRP for the rest of this year and next year. This would involve:
- Suspending the transfer of General Fund revenues to the Transportation Investment Fund (TIF), saving the General Fund \$1 billion for Fiscal Year 2003/04.
- Forgiving repayment of \$500 million from the General Fund to the Traffic Congestion Relief Fund (TCRF).
- Returning \$100 million from the TCRF to the General Fund.
- In addition he proposes to defer the planned 2003/04 TCRF loan repayment of \$50 million from the TCRP to the SHA, and to cancel \$90 million in payments to city and county maintenance road maintenance from the SHA.

We have also begun planning for ways to reduce expenses within the Department. We expect to trim expenditures for contracted employees, reduce some state jobs by attrition and lower our operating expenses.

Fortunately, at this point, layoffs do not appear to be necessary.

Yet, despite the financial challenges we face, we still expect to continue with a significant construction program. We have made considerable progress over the last three years, and we cannot allow our momentum to grind to a halt. For example, California is planning to spend some \$13 billion in the next two years to fund highways, mass transportation, pas-

senger rail and other modes that make up a modern transportation system.

And other potential resources are available. More than \$20 billion is sitting in the Federal Highway Trust Fund in Washington, D.C., and California will be working with its Congressional delegation to ensure that funds will be available for the historic transportation renaissance that is taking place here.

At the same time, the Administration will push ahead aggressively with the California Transportation Commission and scores of regional transportation agencies to keep priority projects moving ahead. We will work to ensure that the most effective congestion-relief projects in the state will receive funding and will be delivered on time.

The bottom line is simple. Under the Governor's direction, state, regional and local transportation planners must come together for the good of California. We know that in the short run the pool of transportation dollars is contracting. However, we must work hard to determine how best to invest our limited transportation dollars.

This is the time that we are most challenged to apply our professionalism. In the coming months, each of us will be called upon to do his or her best. I believe we will. This sense of selfless dedication is part of the tradition of public service that has made Caltrans a world leader in transportation. It is a tradition that we must continue.

We owe it to ourselves and to those who come after us in the Golden State.

## Reverse Commute, Mobility for Poor Focus of Transportation Outreach

By Joyce Parks

Senior Transportation Planner  
Division of Mass Transportation

California's goal to improve mobility across California will have an added challenge in the coming years.

"The growing reverse commute trend in our urban centers is creating a greater need to provide transportation alternatives for workers from the inner city to get to their jobs in the suburbs," said Tom McDonnell, Chief of Caltrans' Division of Mass Transportation. "Our challenge is to find ways to get the workers from their homes in the inner city to employment in the suburbs, when the traditional transportation pattern has flowed from suburb to downtown."

That was the focus of the first Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) conference in Oakland this fall, which brought together elected officials, academicians, clients and more than 150 transportation professionals from transportation and human service agencies throughout the state.

The conference was the culmination of a study by the Institute of Transportation Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, which was funded by Caltrans and the Federal Transit Administration. The study focused on the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento, Los Angeles, San Diego and the San Joaquin Valley.

Over the last 30 years, reverse commuting has become a growing

issue as major employers have opted to locate businesses in outlying suburban areas where land tends to be cheaper and where there is more room for expansion.

The difficulty arises when entry-level/low income workers living in the more affordable inner cities must com-



Photo by John Huseley (D-4)

Job Access and Reverse Commute conference participants included, from left, BT & H Assistant Secretary Rick Vargas, Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown, Mass Transportation Division Chief Tom McDonnell and Caltrans Deputy Director Brian Smith.

mute to these outlying areas for employment. Frequently, public transportation schedules and routes do not align with the travel needs of these transit-dependent workers.

In rural areas of the state, many farm workers who do not have access to cars or public transit experience great difficulty in getting to their jobs in the field.

The JARC conference covered a wide range of topics, such as joint funding opportunities, ways to overcome barriers to coordination, balancing job-access and child-care needs, employer-sponsored shuttle programs, opportunities to build partnerships among agencies and the role of automobile loans and car ownership programs in certain circumstances.

Some of the common themes that emerged from the many plenary sessions and parallel breakout sessions throughout the two-day conference included:

- There is a need to build partnerships, find opportunities to share resources among stakeholders and better coordinate efforts to deliver more efficient transportation services to clients.
- Successful reverse commuting and job access programs require commitment and a renewed spirit of co-operation among all stakeholders, which include; county welfare departments, transportation providers, regional, state and local agencies that provide transportation for clients, community based organizations, and others.
- It should be acknowledged that public transportation may not be the single solution. Car ownership may better serve the mobility needs of certain groups, such as workers in rural areas or single parents with child-care demands.
- Transit should not be addressed in isolation of other life issues, such as child-care, job searches for those getting off of welfare or the special needs of elderly or handicapped workers.
- The fact that JARC funds are guaranteed for only one year, tends to discourage eligible applicants from applying for a grant. Additionally, a disproportionate amount of JARC funds are awarded through congressional earmarks. A competitive

block grant program with minimal earmarks might encourage better projects be proposed for funding.

- Criteria other than dollar cost must be established to effectively evaluate transportation strategies, and those strategies must be evaluated over a period of time before being used as the basis for crafting policies.

"Judging by the enthusiasm generated at the conference and the desire among many participants to keep the momentum of the conference going, the need to maintain ongoing dialogue became very apparent," observed McDonnell. "To make it happen, Caltrans stepped up by offering to organize a standing committee of key players who will meet on a regular basis to provide a forum for discussion and the development of initiatives to advance our cause," he added.

To access the report from the statewide reverse commuting and job access study, entitled "Reverse Commuting and Job Access in California, Markets, Needs and Policy Prospects" dated September, 2002, log onto: [www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/).

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document is available in Braille, large print, on audiocassette or computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to the Caltrans

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# Happy Holidays From The Agency Secretary

I want to take this opportunity during the holiday season to applaud the dedicated department employees of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency for the many positive accomplishments we have made together. While too many to mention here, some of our successes include:

- Putting an historic \$7 billion into transportation construction projects all across the state.
- Enhancing state security, including implementation of the Amber Alert child abduction warning system.

- Helping a record number of patients resolve their HMO problems through our new Department of Managed Health Care.
- Partnering with the California State University system to address the issues of underage drinking and student alcohol abuse.
- Providing new online services via the Internet, such as vehicle registration and real estate licensing.
- Launching the “Seniors Against Investment Fraud” (SAIF) program.
- Becoming a national leader in safety belt education (California was the only state in the country in 2001 to earn an “A” grade from the National Safety Council).
- Making an annual HMO Report Card available for consumers choosing an HMO.
- Donating thousands of books on an annual basis to children of migrant farm workers in honor of César E. Chávez.

As always, there will be new challenges in the year ahead, like the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21). This is a priority because we are seeking more money for California’s transportation infrastructure, which will help strengthen our key role in supporting the global economic competitiveness of the state and nation.

There is the challenge of implementing the \$2.1 billion housing bond voters passed in November. The measure will fund over 134,000 affordable housing units, including 23,000 low-income rental units, double the number of shelter beds and create new housing opportunities for farm workers, the disabled and seniors. Homebuyer programs funded through the bond will assist over 80,000 households in becoming or remaining homeowners.


And there is our agency’s emphasis on corporate responsibility – seeking to reduce the incidence of fraud in business

transactions, promoting consumer education and protection, and cracking down on predatory practices and fraudulent investment schemes.

Given our agency’s record of success, I’m confident we will meet our goals for the coming year.

As 2002 draws to a close, let us take the opportunity to reflect on the good fortunes we enjoyed and celebrate with family and friends. But also, please take care of one another by driving safely, whether traveling just across town or across the state. I wish you a fulfilling New Year and safe travels wherever you may go. Have a happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

  
*Maria Contreras-Sweet, Secretary  
Business, Transportation and  
Housing Agency*

## Major Transportation Improvements on Tap for District 2’s Redding Area

The greater Redding area will be a hotbed of transportation construction activity with more than \$83 million worth of improvements designed to ease traffic congestion and improve driver safety scheduled over the next four years.

Highlighting the work is the \$14.5 million rehabilitation of Highway 299 on Redding’s west side from Iron Mountain Road to Court Street. Improvements include the removal of over one-half mile of five-lane roadway through the main commercial area of west Redding, replacing it with color tinted Portland Cement Concrete (PCC). The new PCC surface treatment will provide an extended life structural section,

eliminating the yearly maintenance repairs and costs associated with the disruption to the local businesses, while providing a context sensitive solution that is pleasing to the community.

Completion of the work is scheduled by autumn of 2003. The 3.6-mile restoration project is the first of seven major projects to improve the state highway system in the greater Redding area, home to the Department’s District 2.

“Redding is the economic hub of the north state. When fully completed, these projects will ease congestion in downtown Redding and improve access from the east to the west sides of the city and also provide easy access

to the area’s tourist and traveler destination points,” said acting District 2 Director Larry Orcutt.

In addition to the Highway 299 rehabilitation, other major projects planned in the coming years are:

- Highway 273 (North Market Street) will be rehabilitated from the Downtown Redding Mall to Interstate 5 at a cost of \$13.7 million, beginning in summer of 2004. Also, \$4.8 million in operational improvements to ease downtown congestion will begin in August 2004.
- Access will be added to westbound Highway 299 (soon to be Highway

44 through route redesignation) from the Hilltop Drive area, as well as auxiliary lanes between Interstate 5 and Auditorium Drive crossing over the Sacramento River on both sides of the freeway. Construction on the \$40 million project will begin between 2004 and 2006.

Future beautification and modernization of Interstate 5 (\$2.9 million); redesignation of Highway 44, Highway 273 and Highway 299 (\$1.6 million), which will reduce traveler confusion; and increase capacity on and improve access to Highway 44 from Airport Road to Palo Cedro, to the east of downtown Redding.

## Los Angeles Traffic Nerve Center Moving to New Home

The District 7 Transportation Management Center (TMC), for more than 30 years ground zero in the daily battle to keep traffic moving in greater Los Angeles, will be moving to a new home.

Ground was broken this month for the new Los Angeles Regional Transportation Management Center (LARTMC) in southeast Glendale near the Highway 2/134 interchange.

The new 89,000 square-foot, \$46 million center will be used by Caltrans traffic managers and the California Highway Patrol to coordinate, monitor and control the transportation management system in Los Angeles and Ventura counties.

The center will manage more than 550 miles of freeway through a fiber optics communication network, changeable message signs, highway advisory radio closed circuit television cameras and ramp meters and surveillance loop stations. The system will detect, verify and send response teams to freeway incidents, suggest alternate routes and alert motorists to road emergencies.

The new center is expected to be up and running in 2004.

Marco Ruano, District 7 Chief of Freeway Operations, said the new building will house both the District 7 TMC and the CHP Los Angeles Communication Center, which is their operations hub for Southern California.

“This new facility will provide a central location for both Caltrans traffic

managers and the CHP to work jointly in responding quickly to incidents that bring traffic to a halt. With better coordination and information sharing, we will be able to deploy our resources more efficiently to clear accidents and get traffic moving,” said Ruano.

The new TMC will be the largest in the state. The center responds to more than 2,700 incidents a year.

While only a short 10-minute drive from the District 7 headquarters building, the new location represents another giant step in the evolution of traffic management in Los Angeles.

“We have come a long way from the first TMC at 6th and Vermont,” recalled Chuck O’Connell, retired District 7 Deputy Director for Traffic Operations.

O’Connell, who spent nearly 40 years with District 7, took over responsibility of the TMC in the late 1970s and was intimately involved in its evolution for more than 20 years.

The idea for the TMC was the brainchild of then Deputy District Director Bill Schaefer and traffic engineer Dave Roper.

“That was back in the days when we first started using ramp meters and changeable message signs on the 42-mile loop created by the Santa Monica, Harbor and San Diego freeways and the



*District 7’s Transportation Management Center, a downtown Los Angeles mainstay for 30 years, will be moving to southeast Glendale near the Highway 2/134 interchange.*



media began providing helicopter traffic reports. The idea was to have a central location where the various information on the San Diego Freeway could be collected and analyzed,” he said. “It was an exercise to see if the concept would work. It did,” said O’Connell.

The district set up the TMC in a little office at 6th and Vermont streets in downtown Los Angeles.

“Even back then, it was evident that information was critical in keeping traffic moving,” O’Connell said.

As more and more routes were added to the TMC’s responsibility, more space was needed, so the center was moved in the early 1970s to the Caltrans District 7 office building on Spring Street.

The TMC continued to expand through the 1970s until it became a national sensation with the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. The TMC became a central point in providing

motorists with information that kept traffic flowing during the games. A decade later, a contingent from Atlanta would use the Los Angeles experience as the foundation for the sophisticated traffic management system they employed for 1996 Olympics in Georgia’s capital.

The Los Angeles TMC was once again on the national stage during the aftermath of the 1994 Northridge earthquake. The TMC became the hub in managing traffic until damaged freeways were repaired and reopened.

Caltrans functions to be housed at the facility include the TMC operation, ramp metering, freeway service patrol, traffic management teams, planned lane closures and the traffic signal unit.

Also operating from the center will be the maintenance radio dispatch center, media affairs and District 7’s HQ telecommunications function.



Caltrans Cooks

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“We recognize that people want to be with their families on the holidays and we try to accommodate them, but any hint of a storm and they are on the job,” Richins explained.

Throughout the summer and fall, maintenance crews have been busy stockpiling materials that will be



John Pramuk has been dishing up tasty treats for Caltrans maintenance crews for 20 years.

needed, including everything from sand to foodstuffs. The mountain stations try to have about a two-week supply of materials just in case. During a storm, supplies are replenished as they are used.

“We have a pretty good system in place that has worked well for many years. We have never run short,” Richins said.

## From the Mailbox

Dear Mr. Morales,

I am writing to you to give you a progress report on I-805 between Nobel and Governor. First, I want to thank you very much for taking your time to reconsider this case, I appreciate your dedication and concern for “little” people like myself that don’t understand the policies of Caltrans.

Yesterday Ken McGuire and Richard Haggstrom personally came to investigate the possible opening of the shoulder to bicycles on I-805 between Governor and Nobel in San Diego, thanks to your prescient intervention. In addition to Mr. Haggstrom and Mr. McGuire from your office, Daniel P. Gallagher and James P Floyd of San Diego Caltrans District 11 and myself all rode bicycles on the freeway as well as the alternate route. Mr. James P. Floyd of San Diego Caltrans District 11 rode the “chase” car.

After the ride, of course Mr. McGuire and Mr. Haggstrom, were non committal about approval or non approval of permitting bicycles on the shoulder between Nobel and Governor on I-805. I am writing this letter however, to give you my impressions, even if it turns out Caltrans is unable to open that stretch of freeway to bikes.

I was extremely impressed with the professionalism of your team that rode with me on the route. Mr. Haggstrom and Mr. McGuire are VERY thorough and careful! After completing 35 minutes of ride up several steep hills, Mr. Haggstrom wanted to ride again so that he could evaluate and inspect the southbound lanes of I-805 between Nobel and Governor, well we immediately took off again to review that portion of the route. I was asked a number of questions about pertinent matters relating to the freeway and alternate route by these gentlemen. Both these guys were very sincere, knowledgeable, helpful and competent. I was also impressed with Mr. Gallagher and his fine guidance through the Caltrans bureaucracy and helping me to understand that, just because a new road and freeway entrance/exit were constructed (Nobel Drive) doesn’t mean Caltrans is going to open the freeway to bikes even if it would make a bicyclist life easier. Mr. KC Butler of the San Diego County Bicycle Coalition was a positive boost to the review and bike ride, he is obviously

a bicycle enthusiast, whose youth and physical shape I envy. Mr. James P Floyd was helpful with the only vehicle and documenting each step of the freeway opening and alternate route with photographs.

I don’t know what will happen, if it will be approved or not but I certainly am thankful for your effort in reconsideration!

If I might add one more thing, I am 53 years old, I have 5 children (ages 8, 11, 16, 17, 19 years old), my family is all important to me and I would not do anything that might risk me not living to be their father. So if I can share with you my personal criteria for me traversing the freeway between Governor and Nobel on I-805 (I know these considerations are probably wildly different than Caltrans’). Safety for me is all important. If there was not the exit only lane between the shoulder running the entire 6/10 of a mile buffering the shoulder from the main freeway, I don’t know if I would ride the freeway? I feel I have an extra measure of time and vision to avoid a vehicle if someone suddenly careens off the freeway onto the shoulder. And if the inattentive driver veers over the line, I have the whole exit lane to go before he reaches me. The fact that my exposure time is only 6/10 of a mile means I have less of a chance of being hit. Of course the reason I and other bicyclists would consider riding on the freeway is the time and fatigue factor. I can literally shave 1/2 hour each way from my commute, not to mention biking up the hills the long way around is tiring.

I weigh this against commuting on the gauntlet of Miramar Road, a 6 lane road with 50 mile per hour limit (frequently exceeded to 60 mph) and its bike lane which is right on Miramar Road with no buffer at all. I think the I-805 freeway is a much safer bet.

Anyway, I again thank you for your excellent leadership, thoughtfulness and help in reconsidering the matter. I thank our governor for choosing you to head up Caltrans, it is obvious your office is open to even the common folk like me! Thank you for everything!

Very Truly Yours,

Joe Seckelman

## Exams Schedule

The Caltrans Examination Office is providing the following examination information for December.

- Associate Environmental Planner
- Associate Right of Way Agent
- Associate Transportation Planner
- Electrical Engineering Technician II

The following examinations allow for continuous filing:

- Accountant Trainee
- Caltrans Electrician I
- Caltrans Electrician II
- Caltrans Electrical Technician
- Caltrans Heavy Equipment Mechanic
- Data Processing Manager II
- Deputy Attorney, Caltrans
- Deputy Attorney III & IV, Caltrans
- Graduate Legal Assistant
- Litigation Specialist I & II
- Structural Design Technician I
- Transportation Engineering Technician
- Transportation Surveyor, Caltrans
- Transportation Surveyor – Party Chief, Caltrans

The following examinations allow for continuous filing on the Internet:

- Environmental Planner (Natural Science)
- Landscape Associate
- Senior Environmental Planner
- Senior Right of Way Agent
- Senior Transportation Engineer, Caltrans
- Transportation Engineer (Civil)
- Transportation Engineer (Electrical)
- Transportation Planner

Visit the Caltrans website at  
[www.dot.ca.gov/hq/jobs](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/jobs)  
for open, promotional, CEA and MSDP Examinations.

## State Grants to Promote Bicycle, Pedestrian Safety

Governor Gray Davis has awarded community grants for 110 projects totaling nearly \$30 million that are designed to promote safety for pedestrians and bicyclists across the state.

The funds will help a variety of community projects ranging from installing stripes and pavement markers in Clearlake in Lake County to pedestrian rail crossings in Fresno and crosswalk lights in the Southern California community of Compton.

The funds come from two sources.

### Safe Routes to Schools

The Governor has approved the release of \$22 million in federal funds to support 87 projects in the Safe Routes to Schools program. The program is designed to underwrite safety projects such as traffic signs and signals, bicycle lanes, sidewalks and crosswalks.

The program was made possible through the passage of a bill signed

into law in 1999, to make some \$125 million available for safe routes through 2004.

### Bicycle Transportation Account

The Governor also released \$7.2 million for 23 projects in the Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) program. Funds are available each year through 2006. This year they will go towards projects ranging from a memorial bike trail in Paradise, Butte County to a lighting project for a bike trail in Monterey and a bikeway and bridge in Irvine, Orange County.

BTA funds can be used for such purposes as bikeways that serve transportation corridors, the elimination of hazards, bicycle parking and traffic control devices.

For a complete list of recipients of pedestrian and bicycle safety improvement grants, visit this web site – <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/>.



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